

Principles and Tips for Addressing Bullying or Harassment Behaviors

- 1. DO NOT BLAME YOURSELF.**

Sexual harassment and bullying is not something that you bring upon yourself. You cannot hold yourself responsible for someone else's actions or behavior, nor are you to respond with like behavior.
- 2. Assess the situation:** Recognize if you are being bullied or if this is one isolated incident. When you are in the right frame of mind, reassess your emotional reaction as well before you take any drastic action. If the unpleasant behavior is targeted over a period of time and repeated, then you need to realize that you may be being bullied or harassed and it needs to stop.
- 3. DO NOT DELAY.**

Your actions to put an end to the harassment should be immediate. The longer you delay your own actions, the longer the harassment or bullying is likely to continue.
- 4. Speak the truth** (no threats, no insults, no obscenities, no appeasing verbal fluff and padding). Be serious, straightforward, and blunt but remain professional. Demand that the harassment or bullying stop. Make it clear that all staff have the right to be free from sexual harassment or bullying.
 - Stick to your own agenda. Don't respond to the harasser's excuses or diversionary tactics.
 - His/her behavior is the issue. Say what you have to say, and repeat it if he/she persists.
 - Reinforce your statements with strong, self-respecting body language: eye contact, head up, shoulders back, a strong, serious stance. Don't smile. Timid, submissive body language will undermine your message.
 - Do not apologize, make an excuse, or ask a question. You do not need to say sorry for how you feel or what you want. Be firm.
 - You do not need to respond to diversions, questions, threats, blaming, or guilt-tripping. Stay on your own agenda. Stick to your point. Repeat your statement or leave.
 - Name the behavior and state that it is wrong. For example say, "Do not whistle at me, that is harassment," or "Do not touch me, that is sexual harassment."
 - Tell them exactly what you want. Say, for example, "move away from me," "stop touching me," or "go stand over there." Or, " Stop speaking to me that way."
 - Ask them if they would want their mother/grandmother/grandfather, son/daughter, treated like they are treating you.
 - Make an all-purpose anti-harassment statement, such as: "Stop harassing others. I don't like it. No one likes it. Show some respect." Speak it in a neutral but assertive tone.
 - Use an A-B-C statement (and be very concrete about A and C): Tell the harasser what the problem is; State the effect; and What you want. Here is an example: "When you make kissing noises at me it makes me feel uncomfortable. I want you to say Hello and my name from now on if you want to talk to me."
 - Identify the perpetrator: "Man in the yellow shirt, stop touching me."
 - Attack the behavior, not the person. Tell them what they are doing that you do not like ("You are standing too close") rather than blaming them as a person ("You are such a jerk").
 - Use the "Miss Manners' Approach" and ask the harasser or bully something like, "I beg your pardon!" or "I can't believe you said that," or "You must have me confused with someone to whom you think you can speak that way," combined with facial expressions of shock, dismay, and disgust.
 - Ask a Socratic question such as, "That's so interesting – can you explain why you think you can put your hand on my leg?"
- 5. Confront the bully:** There may be a possibility that the bully does not really know that he/she is bullying you and that his/her actions are stressing you out. Having an open discussion gives the person a chance to revisit his/her behavior. If you see the bully getting defensive or retaliating, end the conversation and report it to a supervisor or Human Resources.
 - Remember—YOU decide when you're done. Success is how you define it. If you said what you needed to say and you're ready to leave, do so.
- 6. Report the bully to your supervisor, another Riverside leader, Human Resources:** It may be easier said than done, but keep the emotion out of the equation. When presenting your case, be as objective as you can in recounting your experiences and sharing your experience.
- 7. Do not be a bystander**
 - If you see something, say something. If you are present when someone is being sexually harassed or bullied, don't stay silent or ignore it. It is important to isolate the offender and show that the victim or harassment or bullying has widespread support. When that happens, the harasser/bully will typically end the behavior.